

The Troublemaker
Lesson #2
2 Corinthians 1:12-2:17

Paul's introduction in this letter reminded the Corinthians that believers will suffer because Christ suffered. But suffering is not in vain and God is faithful to comfort and sustain us. We can rely on God. Paul also asked the believers to pray for him, specifically that the Lord would "*continue to deliver us.*" (2 Corinthians 1:10)

Change In Plans - 2 Corinthians 1:12-2:4

In the previous letter to the church at Corinth, Paul wrote of plans to spend the winter with them. After hearing of more trouble, Paul changed his plans and made a quick but painful visit to them. One particular individual was now actively opposing Paul and using his change in plans as proof against his credibility. Paul defended himself against this person (verse 12) with, "*now this is our boast.*" Boast is a Greek word that Paul used several times in this letter. I will explain his reason in the lecture, but for the written lesson "*boast*" means "that in which one glories, a matter or grounds of glorying."

1. In what did Paul "boast" or find comfort regarding this quick visit in Corinth?
(2 Corinthians 1:12)

2. What was Paul's defense of the letter he had written? (2 Corinthians 1:13a)

3. What was his hope in writing the letter? (2 Corinthians 1:13b, 14)

4. What did Paul say were his original plans and why? (2 Corinthians 1:15, 16)

5. Because Paul changed his plans (twice), this was being used as proof of his unreliability. How did Paul defend his plans? (2 Corinthians 1:17)

6. The troublemaker was not only using this against Paul, but also against the reliability of the gospel message that Paul brought. How did Paul counter those accusations?
 - 2 Corinthians 1:18
 - 2 Corinthians 1:19
 - 2 Corinthians 1:20
7. As further proof, what four works did Paul list as evidence of God's faithfulness in the life of the believer? (2 Corinthians 1:21, 22)
8. Calling upon God to serve as his witness, what was Paul's reason for not returning to Corinth as originally planned? (2 Corinthians 1:23 – 2:1)
9. Using 2 Corinthians 2:3, 4
 - How did Paul describe his emotional state when writing that letter?
 - What did he say was his motivation in writing?

Forgive the Troublemaker – 2 Corinthians 2:5-11

10. This one person was not only causing a problem for Paul, but others as well. Who did Paul say was also being affected? (2 Corinthians 2:5)

11. How was this situation to be handled? (2 Corinthians 2:6)
12. Paul said that was "sufficient." What did he say they were to do instead, and why?
 - 2 Corinthians 2:7
 - 2 Corinthians 2:8
13. Paul's letter had been very harsh, yet necessary. What was Paul's reason for this? (2 Corinthians 2:9)
14. Paul stated that if they forgive him then he also forgives. Who does Paul say is watching as witness to forgiveness? (2 Corinthians 2:10)
15. Why are repentance (implied in the word "sorrow" of verse 7) and forgiveness so important in the life of the believer as well as the church body? (2 Corinthians 2:11)

Paul Defends His Ministry - 2 Corinthians 2:12-17

16. Returning to the issue of his travels, why did Paul say that he went to Troas? (2 Corinthians 2:12)
17. Even though there was an open door in Troas, Paul said he did not have peace of mind. Why was Paul unsettled and where did he go? (2 Corinthians 2:13)

18. At this point, Paul broke out into praise to God. In light of the difficult situation Paul was writing about, what was he thanking God for? (2 Corinthians 2:14)

19. Because of his ministry before God, how did he describe this? (2 Corinthians 2:15, 16a)

20. Paul asked the question, "Who is equal to such a task?" How did he defend himself? (2 Corinthians 2:17)

What do you think?

21. Reflect on this lesson and how one person can impact the ministry of the whole church. Was there anything Paul wrote that stood out to you?

22. In this lesson, the individual is referred to as a troublemaker. Do you think one person could also have the same affect on the whole church as a positive influence?